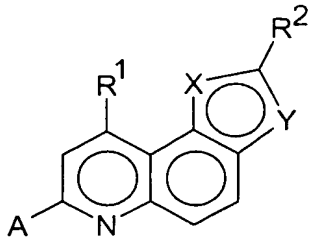
What is Claimed is:

1. A compound of formula (I),



(I)

wherein the elements X, Y, A, R^1, R^2 and R^3 have the following meanings:

X denotes a nitrogen atom (N), oxygen atom (O) or sulphur atom (S);

Y denotes a nitrogen atom, if X denotes an oxygen atom or sulphur atom;

Y denotes a nitrogen atom with a bound group R^3 or a sulphur atom or an oxygen atom, if X denotes a nitrogen atom;

A denotes an unsubstituted or substituted mono-, di- or tricyclic aromatic group, which contains either no or 1-3 heteroatoms selected from nitrogen, oxygen and sulphur, at least one of the heteroatoms being a nitrogen atom;

R^1 denotes hydroxy, fluorine, chlorine or bromine, amino, (C_{1-6})alkylamino, di(C_{1-6})alkylamino, (C_{3-7})cycloalkylamino, di(C_{3-7})cycloalkylamino, (C_{1-6})alkyl-(C_{3-7})cycloalkylamino, acetidin-1-yl, pyrrolidin-1-yl, pyrrolin-1-yl, imidazolidin-1-yl, imidazolin-1-yl, pyrazolidin-1-yl, pyrazolin-1-yl, piperidin-1-yl, piperazin-1-yl, morpholin-4-yl, thiomorpholin-4-yl, thiomorpholin-S-oxid-4-yl, thiomorpholin-S-dioxid-4-yl, or hexamethyleneimino; and

R^2 and R^3 independently of one another denote hydrogen, (C_{1-8})alkyl or (C_{3-7})cycloalkyl,

or a salt thereof.

2. The compound of claim 1, wherein the group A is phenyl, pyridyl, pyrimidyl, pyridazinyl, pyrazinyl, imidazolyl, pyrazolyl, oxazolyl, isoxazolyl, furazanyl, thiazolyl, isothiazolyl or pyrrolyl, unsubstituted or substituted by the groups R^4, R^5 and R^6, where R^4, R^5 and R^6 independently of one another denote

hydrogen, (C_{1-8})alkyl, monofluoro(C_{1-5})alkyl, difluoro(C_{1-5})alkyl, trifluoro(C_{1-5})alkyl, (C_{3-7})cycloalkyl, hydroxy, (C_{1-6})alkoxy, fluoromethyloxy, difluoromethyloxy, trifluoromethyloxy, (C_{3-6})cycloalkyloxy, fluorine, chlorine, bromine, carboxy, (C_{1-6})alkoxycarbonyl, amino, (C_{1-6})alkylamino, di(C_{1-6})alkylamino, acetidin-1-yl, pyrrolidin-1-yl, piperidin-1-yl, (C_{1-4})acylamino, (C_{1-6})alkyl-(C_{1-4})acylamino, aminocarbonyl, (C_{1-6})alkylaminocarbonyl, di(C_{1-6})alkylaminocarbonyl, acetidin-1-yl-carbonyl, pyrrolidin-1-yl-carbonyl or piperidin-1-yl-carbonyl.

3. The compound of claim 2, wherein the group A denotes pyridyl or fluorophenyl.

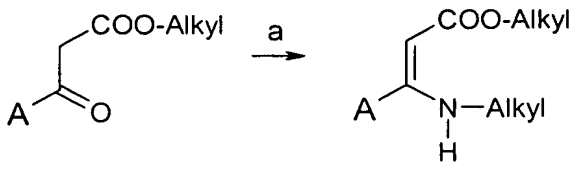
4. The compound of claim 1, wherein the group R^1 denotes amino, methylamino or dimethylamino.

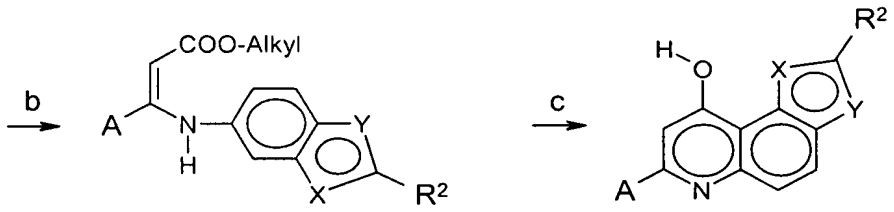
5. The compound of claim 1, wherein the group R^2 denotes methyl.

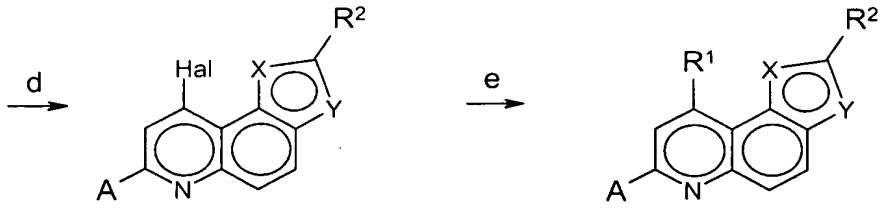
6. The compound of claim 1, wherein the group R^3 denotes methyl.

7. The compound of claim 1 selected from among the compounds:
3-methyl-9-methylamino-7-(pyridin-4-yl)-3H-imidazo[4,5-f]quinoline;
7-(3-fluorophenyl)-3-methyl-9-methylamino-3H-imidazo[4,5-f]quinoline;
9-dimethylamino-7-(3-fluorophenyl)-3-methyl-3H-imidazo[4,5-f]quinoline;
9-dimethylamino-7-(3-fluorophenyl)-2-methyl-thiazolo[4,5-f]quinoline;
9-dimethylamino-7-(3-fluorophenyl)-thiazolo[5,4-f]quinoline;
7-(3-fluorophenyl)-2-methyl-9-methylamino thiazolo[4,5-f]quinoline;
9-dimethylamino-3-methyl-7-(pyridin-3-yl)-3H-imidazo[4,5-f]quinoline;
3-methyl-9-methylamino-7-(pyridin-3-yl)-3H-imidazo[4,5-f]quinoline;
2-methyl-9-methylamino-7-(pyridin-3-yl)-thiazolo[4,5-f]quinoline; and
9-dimethylamino-2-methyl-7-(pyridin-3-yl)-thiazolo[4,5-f]quinoline.

8. A process for preparing a compound of claim 1, wherein a 3-oxo-propionic acid ester, the carbonyl group of which is bound to the desired group A, is reacted according to the following reaction plan to give a compound according to the invention, wherein







process step a is carried out in the presence of a primary amine;
process step b is carried out in the presence of the desired amino derivative of benzimidazole, benzoxazole or benzthiazole;
process step c is carried out in the presence of a suitable solvent;
process step d is carried out in the presence of a halogenating agent; and
process step e is carried out in the presence of the desired amine.

9. A pharmaceutical composition comprising as an active ingredient a compound of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

10. A method for alleviating or treating pain in a warm blooded animal, comprising administering a therapeutically effective amount of a compound of claim 1.